



CITY OF ANNISTON MEDIA ADVISORY

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— TRAGEDY AT U.S. 431 INTERSECTION INTENSIFIES SEARCH FOR SOLUTION —

ANNISTON, AL – The site of a fatal traffic accident in Anniston on Friday, July 7, has intensified efforts by local officials to work with the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) to address safety concerns at the intersection of U.S. 431 and Coleman and Choccolocco Roads, where the accident occurred.

Five automobiles and a tractor-trailer were involved in the July 7 accident that resulted in several injuries and one fatality. An investigation is underway as to the cause. Meanwhile, city officials have scheduled internal meetings on Monday, July 10 with employees from the City's Public Works, Police, Fire, Planning, and Engineering Departments, as well as representatives from ALDOT, the trucking industry, and other external agencies to address safety concerns. Summaries of those meetings will be made available to the news media following the discussions.

"My first concern is for the victims of the July 7 traffic accident and their families," said Anniston Mayor Jack Draper. "My thoughts and prayers go out to them."

Draper emphasized that clear and immediate measures are being taken by City Hall to affect change along that particular stretch of U.S. 431, which is regulated by ALDOT.

Anniston City Manager Kent Davis was on site minutes after the wreck occurred. He commended the response of emergency personnel, which involved Anniston police and fire departments as well as paramedics from Anniston and Oxford. "It was a stressful and tragic situation, and our emergency personnel responded with professionalism and compassion."

Davis stressed that more will be added to what has been done to address safety at the intersection. "Our police department has already increased patrols in that area to cut down on speeding and other traffic infractions," said Davis. "We will also immediately step up our partnership with ALDOT to determine both

short-term and long-term engineering improvements that we can make to that section of U.S. 431. Nothing is off-the-table as far as potential safety improvements.”

The intersection has been the site of serious traffic accidents since the opening of a new portion of U.S. 431 (McClellan Veterans Parkway) north of Iron Mountain Road in late 2015. For the past several months, ALDOT has engaged in an engineering study of that section of U.S. 431 to determine traffic engineering solutions that might be implemented to improve safety. A recommendation from ALDOT made earlier this year to increase speed limits on U.S. 431 near the intersection was not approved by Anniston City Council members due to safety concerns.

The City of Anniston will post updates regarding plans for U.S. 431 near the intersection of Coleman Road on the City website at <http://anniston.al.gov/> and on its Facebook site at <https://www.facebook.com/thecityofanniston/>

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